

***The Volunteer Monitor* Newsletter**

Request for Initial Proposals

Announcement No. 2003-2

May 15, 2003

Summary

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds is seeking to award financial assistance to an organization or individual to write, edit, publish and distribute *The Volunteer Monitor* newsletter. *The Volunteer Monitor* is produced twice a year. This cooperative agreement would be for three years. Ideally, the recipient would have the following characteristics: experience in writing, editing, producing and distributing a large national newsletter; experience and contacts in the volunteer water monitoring field; demonstrated expertise in environmental science; and a history of successful performance as a grant recipient.

Background

The Volunteer Monitor is the nation's national newsletter in the field of volunteer environmental monitoring. It is produced twice a year and reaches over 20,000 readers in volunteer monitoring programs; watershed organizations; academia; and federal, state and local agencies. *The Volunteer Monitor* contains in-depth articles on monitoring methods, volunteer program development and maintenance, and research in the field. EPA has sponsored this newsletter through a cooperative agreement since 1989.

EPA seeks to provide financial assistance to a non-profit organization or other eligible entity under the Clean Water Act's Section 104(b)(3)(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 66.436, Assessment and Watershed Protection Program Grants) to provide this newsletter for the volunteer monitoring community, states, local governments, and other potential data users, and so encourage the growth and continuing enhancement of volunteer organizations dedicated to monitoring, protecting and restoring the nation's waters. The form of financial assistance will be a three year cooperative agreement. There will be substantial EPA involvement in this cooperative agreement, including the EPA project manager's participation on an editorial board (along with a group of interested volunteer monitoring program coordinators from around the country) and frequent communication with the recipient. Up to \$70,000 is available for the first year of this cooperative agreement. However, there is no guarantee that future money will be available. No match is required; however, projects with matching funding or in-kind services may be favored.

Tasks to Include in Initial Proposal (Maximum pages: 4 single spaced)

In the preparation of the proposal, please note that it is the Government's intent to support the

efforts of the recipient, and not to obtain services for its direct use and benefit.

1. Description of applicant organization (including experience and expertise)
2. Description of how this project complies with the organization's mission.
3. Brief biographies of applicant lead(s) including resumes and/or curricula vitae.
4. Description of general budget identifying costs associated with tasks listed below.
5. Brief description of how the recipient would prepare *The Volunteer Monitor* newsletter, including the following tasks:
 - o recruit volunteer monitoring experts to write articles for the newsletter;
 - o edit and proof submitted articles, and research additional items for inclusion in the newsletter;
 - o lay out the design of each issue, and solicit photographs and artwork as needed;
 - o maintain a mailing list of approximately 11,000 subscribers;
 - o print and mail copies; develop electronic version.

Selection Criteria and Project Review Process

All initial proposals will be evaluated using the following general categories of criteria:

- o experience in writing, editing, producing and distributing a large national newsletter (40%)
- o experience and professional contacts in the field of volunteer water monitoring (40%)
- o demonstrated expertise in science (10%)
- o history of successful performance as a grant recipient (10%)

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals or applications and make no award. Each of the initial proposals will be evaluated by a team of EPA staff and ranked according to the above criteria. The panel will notify the respective grantees whether or not their proposal has been selected. A final grant application will be requested, and the administrative process for grant award will begin.

Application Procedure:

This is a request for initial proposals. Applicants are required only to send the work plan and

budget described above (no more than 4 pages, single spaced), along with contact information. Applicants should clearly mark information they consider confidential, and EPA will make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency regulations at 40 CFR part 2, subpart B. Once the applicant is selected, a completed SF-424 Application for Assistance must be completed.

Compliance with Executive Order 12372 (<http://www.cfda.gov/public/eo12372.htm>) is required. Most States have acted to establish a review and comment system in response to E.O 12372 (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>). In such cases, applicants for grants will need to meet the requirements of the intergovernmental consultation process established by a particular State and its local governments before Federal Agencies take action on the application.

If necessary, dispute resolution process will occur in accordance with 40 CFR 30.63.

Application Due Date: June 13, 2003. Any proposals received after this date will not be reviewed.

Expected Date of Award Decision and Notification of Rejections: June 20, 2003

Submit initial proposal to:

Alice Mayo
USEPA (4503T)
Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20460
mayio.alice@epa.gov

Electronic submissions are acceptable.

For more information, contact Alice Mayo at (202)566-1184, mayio.alice@epa.gov.